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Administration at the GIPKh Institute

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the GIPKh Institute was under the direct administration of the Ministry of the Chemical Industry and was not subject to the control of any intermediate direction. The Ministry (located in Moscow) exercised very strict control over the operations of the Institute. Even the most minor matters were referred to Moscow for decision. This close supervision by the Ministry was probably brought about as much by a reluctance on the part of the directors of the Institute to accept responsibility as by any formal administrative control. Whenever any difficulty or new problem arose, those directly concerned would hesitate to make any decision for fear that something would go wrong and that they would be branded as saboteurs. / Such matters

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would invariably be referred to Moscow for decision. The Ministry's decisions would be carried out by the Institute even when it was known that doing so would result in failure. This same fear of punishment paralyzed initiative on all levels of operation.

2. Because of the nature of the work at the Institute, production norms were set in terms of schedules and not in terms of physical output. These target dates or norms were seldom met. One section would announce that, because of certain difficulties, it was forced to delay the completion of its project by five percent. This would be followed in a short time by similar announcements from other sections. This practice did not prevent the holding of internal competitions between the various sections in the Institute nor did it prevent the non-fulfillment of norms or schedules. Many of the other foremen padded their reports in order to give the appearance of fulfillment of norms. When a section failed to fulfill its norm, the management of the Institute would call on the section chief to furnish appropriate explanations. The management would simultaneously apprise the trade union committee (zavkom) and the Institute's party committee of this situation. The section chief would be required to call a meeting of his section in order to determine the causes for this failure and to submit a report of his findings to the zavkom. The assignment of norms was the main method of maintaining labor discipline and controlling output. A chart was posted in each section which listed assignment and fulfillment of norms. Assignments were listed according to sections but fulfillments were listed according to individuals.
3. The Institute's zavkom was generally responsible for the maintenance of proper work conditions, the fulfillment of norms, the improvement of output, etc. Ramasan Tsacharorov was first secretary of the trade union committee during my assignment there. Tsacharorov was neither a technician nor a scientist but held several important administrative positions. In addition to being the zavkom first secretary, he was responsible for the supervision of the German scientists and technicians assigned to the Institute. He also acted as their interpreter. Tsacharorov was a party member and he was a member of the Institute's party committee. He was either a demobilized army major or an officer in civilian clothes. All Soviets employed at the Institute were undoubtedly either party members or individuals who had been cleared for this type of work. I estimate that 50% of the Soviets employed in my section were party members. Both Klukov and Vnukov were leading figures in the Institute's administration. The former was chief of the personnel section and the latter was technical assistant to the director. The German technicians suspected all three of being members of the MGB (the Soviet Ministry of State Security). Other party members were: Gofmann, Kvosiiev, Lewin, Lewitski, Pituchin, Ryabkov, Servyelski, Stefanov, Yertchov, Prokofev (first director and business manager of the Institute during my stay there), and Spak (second director of the Institute and concerned more with the technical aspects of its operations).

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4. The party committee was primarily responsible for the distribution of propaganda material, conducting courses for party members, and for arranging meetings, special ceremonies, etc. Enormous quantities of propaganda material were distributed by agitators, who numbered about one for every ten party members. Agitators also held at least one discussion period a week in each section, shop, or kollektiv, which were attended by all workers. They based the discussions on the material in the Agitators' Notebook (Bloknot Agitatora). Monthly assemblies were held for all employees of the Institute. These assemblies, evidently sponsored by the zavkom, were held individually in each section and dealt with general political subjects as well as with subjects designed to improve labor efficiency and accelerate production. The party committee, however, by no means confined itself to propaganda activities. It evidently received direct orders from Moscow and had the final voice concerning operations. When things were not functioning properly, it would intervene in matters which were normally the responsibility of the Institute management or zavkom. For example, when norms were not met or faulty production detected, the party committee might intercede, investigate the matter, and order corrective measures. The party was also consulted before any major modification was made in the building or before any important operational changes were made. The party committee exercised strong influence in personnel matters. If a non-party worker had a complaint, his only recourse would be through the normal channel - the zavkom. A party member, however, could get more done by appealing directly to the party committee rather than to the zavkom or management. The party committee, in acting on such a complaint, would work through channels. It would take up the matter with the zavkom, which in turn would deal with the worker's foreman or section chief.

5. Despite the intervention of the party committee in such matters, [] noticed no conflict between the party committee and the technicians. Similarly, the party committee and zavkom worked closely together. When any differences in opinion arose, they were generally settled in a spirit of good comradeship.

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Leuna technician who is to install a pipe in his shop and decides that the ceiling would be the best place for it. However, a member of the factory's party committee might come along and order the worker to lay the pipe under the floor. In the Soviet Zone, the worker -- being a German -- would react with the feeling that a party functionary cannot tell an expert anything about his trade. So he would carry out the party's orders, but out of spite, would lay the pipe three feet instead of three inches under the floor, and thus make sure that it could not possibly function. On the other hand, the Soviet technician at the GIPKh Institute would cooperate with the party functionary and arrive at a practicable solution. Another example of the difference between the two systems was illustrated at Leuna,

25X1 [] A laborer, a SED member who worked under my supervision, decided he deserved a better job. The worker appealed to the factory party committee over my head, even though [] was also a SED member. The party took the matter up with the trade union and the trade union ordered the man transferred to a better position, even though he was not qualified for it. The laborer's new foreman, a former Nazi, realized that the man was unqualified, but was afraid to complain and the workman remained in his position. [] the same situation would take place in a Soviet factory, until it was discovered that the laborer was unqualified for his new position. Then he would be demoted.

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Soviet Attitudes

6. [] most Soviet workers support the Communist regime. This is primarily the result of the unrelenting Soviet propaganda and the USSR's isolation from the West. Soviet propaganda appears to be far more intensive, effective and clever than the Nazi propaganda. The average worker automatically accepts statements of Stalin as the unquestionable truth. Furthermore, the average Soviet considers his economic position to be greatly improved; he credits his government for this improvement. [] the workers' lot has improved considerably since the Revolution of 1912. However, [] the average Soviet citizens complain that things were not as good as they were in the "good old days" (meaning pre-World War II times), and that present prices are still higher than in 1939. A ready explanation for this among the Soviet workers, is that present prices are still high because, before the outbreak of the Korean war, prices were raised to facilitate the rebuilding of damages incurred during World War II, and that after Korea, prices remained high to permit rearmament to meet American rearmament and aggression.
7. The Soviet citizen firmly believes in the sincerity of the Soviet peace campaign and is convinced that in signing the Stockholm Appeal and similar petitions, he is furthering the cause of peace. It is also my impression, that all but a small percentage of the population believes in the anti-American propaganda campaign. All the Soviets [] believed that America started the Korean war. There appeared to be a decrease in tension and interest in the war after China's intervention. The Soviets felt that China could take care of matters and there was therefore little chance of the war spreading. They considered Chinese intervention as a normal state action, not an action carried out by volunteers; the Soviets seemed to be proud of it. Politically, [] the average Soviet is much more conversant with world affairs than the average German.
8. [] noticed tension between Soviets and Jews [] in the USSR. [] at the GIPKh Institute in 1947, [] the director of the Institute, a Jew, had recently been replaced by a Soviet, although he was given no reason for his dismissal. During 1949-50, [] Jews, occupying leading positions in the Institute, were being demoted and that Soviets had been appointed as replacements. There was a noticeable effort on the part of the Soviets to hold themselves aloof from the Jews. During the vacation season at Sestroretsk, [] the Soviets would never mingle with Jews when on the beach.

Radio Reception and Soviet Radio

9. []
- [] Reception from Leipzig was sometimes poor because of atmospheric conditions. This was especially true during the Northern Lights period. Occasionally [] pick up RIAS-Berlin, but reception was very poor. [] do not think this was due to any jamming but rather to atmospheric conditions and my radio. Sometimes [] could receive Vienna, Prague, and the Swiss "Alpensender", but again this depended upon atmospheric conditions. In the Leningrad area, it was impossible to receive anything but local broadcasts during the Northern Lights period.

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10. A [] German specialist who had purchased a Soviet set had the same success in receiving Leipzig and RIAS []
 25X1 This radio, which was purchased for Rubles 280 in
 25X1 1948, was the cheapest Soviet set equipped to receive short wave.
 25X1 Radios and television sets were plentiful in Leningrad shops and were readily available for those who could afford them. Prices of radios which were equipped to receive short wave ranged upwards from Rubles 300 and television sets (with a 400 square centimeter screen) were priced at Rubles 1500. These prices may be compared with the average monthly salary of Rubles 800-1000 for Soviet skilled workers and Rubles 500-800 for unskilled workers.
- 25X1 11. [] only 10-15% of the Soviet families in the Leningrad area owned radios. On the other hand, almost every family was equipped with a receiver for the wire radio network (radiouzel). These loudspeakers, or receivers, were very inexpensive, costing only Rubles 60. Evidently every home was automatically provided with an outlet for the wire radio. These outlets were connected to rebroadcasting stations generally located in the main post-office. The lines, built at government expense, required a loudspeaker but no apparatus and permitted the reception of only one program, with no choice. This loudspeaker system was the same as that used in the schools, factories, and village squares. I believe that the people living in the USSR are never beyond the reach of this radio system which I found extremely disturbing. The wire radio network in Leningrad and Sestroretsk carried only the regular program of Leningrad radio station which consisted primarily of news, political speeches and occasionally, music.
- 25X1 12. [] Comment: Assuming that [] information on the party committee is correct, it is interesting to note that the three leading party members occupy key positions in the Institute's administrative apparatus: Vnukov as technical assistant to the director, Tsacharorov as first secretary of the zavkom and "major domo" for the German technicians, and Klukov as personnel chief. This would facilitate coordination between the Institute's management, the party and the trade union. It would also permit the party organ to retain firm control of the Institute's affairs if there were ever a conflict or showdown between any of these three groups. The MGB would similarly be assured of tight supervision if [] suspicions are correct. His account indicates that this is at least true in the case of Tsacharorov and Klukov. He describes these individuals as being the men on the spot, "always around when something was happening". Both Tsacharorov and Klukov accompanied [] four fellow technicians back to Germany when they were repatriated in 1951.⁷

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